

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**'Public Policies and the City'**

**Deadline for submissions: April 30, 2017**

(Articles in English, Portuguese, and Spanish)

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**Background to the special issue**

The territorialization of social struggles and the emergence of social innovations are local responses to global changes that affect cities around the world. (Fleury, Subirats and Blanco, 2009). Cities are the arena of encounter and materialization of the economic (production), political (redistributive), and community (relational) spheres (Polanyi, 1944) of social integration, and the debate on public policies and the city is thus a key topic in public administration. The intellectual attention to the condition of cities has followed the steady increase in their number and size. In that regard, debates on urbanization were widely reverberated in 2008, when according to the United Nations the population in towns and cities surpassed for the first time that in rural areas, and was projected to reach 70 per cent of the world population by 2050.

These urban spaces play a key role in concentrating labor force for the production process and aggregating infrastructure to lessen the cost of the circulation of capital. Therefore, as vast urban spaces concentrate a large share of the world population, cities are the locomotives of national and global economies. However, in places where the intervention of the government has not protected citizenship and inclusion, the costs paid by the working class have been considerably higher, including overcrowding, squalid housing, or high commuting costs (Harvey, 2001). In Brazil, for example, a notable expression of the unbalanced distribution of social costs is the severe issue of housing, which also strikes most metropolises worldwide. In 2010, the Brazilian national housing deficit in cities reached 5.8 million houses, whereas the number of private unoccupied houses was over 6 million (Fundação João Pinheiro,

2013), which thus should be enough to cover the deficit were these properties not seen solely as assets for investments.

This unrealized solution is largely reflected on the spatial organization of the city, and its territorial dimension reproduces socio-spatial urban inequalities. Slums occupy a vast extent of many big cities in countries that have undergone recent processes of economic development (Davis, 2007), composing segregated and more or less autonomous cultural microsystems. Likewise, the truly disadvantaged in the USA and in Europe live in ghettos where urban segregation merges social and ethnical aspects (Wilson, 2012). Such spatial contradictions trigger a dispute for the organization of the city, and neoliberal models are challenged by social struggles that demand the right to the city for every citizen (Lefebvre, 2008). Urban speculation and the process of accumulation of capital are opposed to attempts of restoring the local power and claim the equality of the public sphere, which is politically constructed (Arendt, 1958).

Thanks to its social reproduction function, cities provide the apparatus of maintenance for the labor force that favors everyday encounters, and also the space for the reproduction of the consumption structure that localizes the provision of services. This makes cities the quintessential site for the changes and social innovations that emerge in urban spaces. Projects of solidary economy that acquire multiple forms across territories, startups engaged in the exercise of citizenship, and struggles of an extractive collaborative economy such as AirBnB and Uber are examples of the potentialities afforded by the city in order to change the landscape of the productive arrangements.

In such a complex and dynamic social reality, new technologies of social inclusion create institutional spaces for democratic participation as well (Subirats, 2015). New polycentric forms of exercising the political power are associated with subjectivation, associativism and mobilization through mechanisms of social innovation. Experiences of participatory budgeting (Santos, 1998), participatory master plans for social inclusion in cities (Goulart, Terzi and Otero, 2016), and partnership in urban regeneration policies (Healey, 2006) are examples of management tools created to redistribute local power and increase participation through social networks of management. These new modes of urban democratic governance promote deliberation and relations of cooperation between the plurality of actors and social collectivities that coexist in the city.

Globalization brings, thus, risks generative of social insecurities in the cities, but also opportunities for social action against established issues (Fleury, Subirats and Blanco, 2009). On the one hand, social insecurity is engendered by inter alia selective processes of territorial development, the naturalized neoliberal discourse, and transnational organized crime. On the other hand, global insecurity prompts local responses mainly on local level. Therefore, the dialectics between local and global pervades the debates on cities, and the effects of globalization will be different according to socio-institutional processes of construction of cities and citizenship.

Spaces for social innovation are developed beyond the institutional boundaries of government and they involve the collaboration of organizations and the self-governing network of actors which Stoker (1998) relates to the theory of 'governance'. The partnerships and interdependence of local actors challenge the hierarchical modes of the bureaucratic state and the dependence on the capacity of state to centralize and command. However, the diffusion of social innovation depends,

nevertheless, on the central role of the state in enabling the shared management, the accountability over generated initiatives and the renovation of local elites of power.

Therefore, the state cannot relinquish public policies that are able to coordinate the implementation and diffusion of social innovations that respond to the need of higher inclusion and social cohesion. Multi-disciplinary debates on the successes (Brecher et al., 2010; Siqueira, 2000) and failures (Fleury, 2012; Lacerda, 2016) of the implementation of public policies in the city involve various aspects ranging from the need to coordinate policy networks, local coalitions and inter-governmental agencies, to the importance of advancing social integration beyond the consumption sphere.

### **Suggested topics**

Given the multi-disciplinary and multi-level nature of this special issue, we encourage authors to submit papers on topics that include (but are not limited to) the following:

- The examination of the problem of governmental cooptation of the city as commodity, which reinforces the impacts of the accumulation process of capital produced in the urban space, such as evictions, gentrification, and urban speculation.
- The democratization of the local power, revamping the city with citizens in the exercise of active democracy through participation, social networks and struggles for inclusion.
- Urban social innovation responding to the need of new management technologies, which include *inter alia* participatory budgeting, counsels, and conferences, either on a local level of implementation or at the national level of integration.
- The new urban agenda generated by the dynamic socio-spatial context of cities – demographic changes, mobility, sustainability, elderly and childcare.
- Intergovernmental relations, which are institutionalized through the decentralization and devolution of power, inter-city consortium for shared management of conurbation issues, and shared accountability for policies.
- Collaboration and public-private partnerships as new forms of management and provision of services that involve matters of accountability, sustainability, and responsiveness in the policy networks that link government's sections and other societal actors.

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**The deadline for paper submissions is April 30, 2017.**

Note: please indicate in the field "AUTHOR'S COMMENTS" (bottom of the page – 1st stage of the procedure) that your paper is for the special issue: "Public Policies and the City".

Specific questions about the special issue should be directly addressed to the guest editors.

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